which I had never seen. Shortly after passing Bonifacio we ran into a dead calm; but in a very short time a fresh westerly breeze came up, we ceased steaming and made sail, but before we had run twenty miles the wind flew to the north-west, and soon hardened into a gale with heavy sea, so we ran in and anchored for the night in 8 fathoms, at the head of the Gulf of Sagona. The next morning, about 10, we left our anchorage under steam, and on clearing the bay found a light north-easterly breeze, which soon increased to a strong wind dead ahead, so that, having nothing particular to call us to Genoa, we shaped our course for Villafranca, thus making a fair wind of it. A weary Turtle Dove vainly attempted to alight on board of us, but must, I fear, have eventually fallen into the sea, as it would not trust itself down the wind. We got into Villafranca harbour about the middle of the night, and moved round to Nice on the following morning. I had not set foot ashore there since 1862, and should not have known the town again, so much had it increased in every direction; but I was glad to find my old friend Louis Galle, naturalist and barber, still alive and flourishing in his little shop on the Cours; he had a few locally rare skins of birds, e. g. *Falco vespertinus, Lanius minor*, &c., and assured me of a recent occurrence of *Sterna caspia* at the mouth of the Var. He also had several interesting reptiles alive, amongst them a beautiful specimen of *Coronella girondica*, which I bought and deposited safely in the Regent's Park Reptile-house on our arrival in London on May 25th. I may add that all the specimens of Audouin's Gull obtained by us in the Straits exhibited the peculiar coloration of legs and feet that I have mentioned above.

XXVII.—*On Horsfield's Woodcock,* Scolopax saturata.

By Henry Seebohm.

Since I wrote my paper on the genus *Scolopax* (Ibis, 1886, p. 127), I have had an opportunity of comparing the type of *S. rosenbergi* in the Leyden Museum with two examples of *S. saturata* in the same collection, and I find them to be identical. The type of *S. saturata* was, twelve years ago, in the India Museum. The species was described in 1821 from an example collected by Horsfield in Java; but it may have disappeared before the birds in the India Museum were handed over to the national collection, as it cannot now be found.

It is unfortunate that the type of so interesting a species should have been lost, as no examples are known to exist in any other collection than the Leyden Museum, which possesses two collected by Boie on the mountains of Java. One of these two examples is moulting its quills, and the first primary is not full-grown, being half an inch shorter than the second. In the other example the two first primaries are of about the same length.

In 1869, when Schlegel was describing the type of *Scolopax rosenbergi,* he unfortunately compared it with the example of *S. saturata* in which the first primary was not fully grown. This circumstance—combined, no doubt, with the fact that the Javan example, having been exposed on the shelves of the Leyden Museum to the combined action of more or less dust and sunshine for nearly forty years, had acquired a "museum colour," which contrasted considerably with the fresh-killed example from New Guinea—induced Schlegel to designate the latter as distinct. Horsfield described *S. saturata* as one of the rarest of Javan birds, inhabiting a mountain 7000 feet above the sea-level. Schlegel recorded his supposed new species from the mountains in the interior of the north-western peninsula of New Guinea. The fact that Wallace's Line dividing his Oriental Region from his Australian Region passes between the two localities, and the further fact that in the Moluccas, which lie, if not exactly, at least to some extent between the two localities, a perfectly distinct species of Woodcock, *S. rochusseni,* is found, suggest the probability that the two birds are distinct. This does not, however, seem to be the case. Limicoline birds appear to have originated in the Polar area and to have been dispersed—certainly once, and probably twice—by climatic changes which, by depriving them of food, compelled them to emigrate. Their present distribution is the result of past emigration; but, as might be expected from their great powers of flight, it bears no relation to the zoological regions which control the geographical distribution of Passerine birds.

The Javan Woodcock has been found by two collectors, Horsfield and Boie; and the New-Guinea Woodcock has also been obtained by two collectors, Rosenberg and Bruijn. Salvadori (Orn. Papuasia e delle Molucche, iii. p. 235) records the presence of a second example of the latter species from Mount Arfak, in the same peninsula of New Guinea, in the museum of Count Turati in Milan. It seems therefore impossible to come to the conclusion that Horsfield's Woodcock can be a resident in only one of the two localities where it has been found, and an accidental visitor to the other. Our knowledge of the birds residing in the mountains of the various islands of the Malay archipelago is unfortunately very imperfect, and we can only assume that Horsfield's Woodcock is a resident in the chain of islands from Java to Western New Guinea. It is, however, possible that it may be a migratory bird, breeding in the mountains of South-eastern Thibet and wintering on the islands of the Malay archipelago. That it should be confined to two localities so isolated as Java and Western New Guinea, would be an instance of a discontinuous area of distribution, too unusual to be accepted without much stronger proofs of its correctness than we now possess.

The number of typical Woodcocks is thus reduced to four. No other species of the large genus *Scolopax* have silvery tips to the under surface of the tail-feathers, or transverse instead of longitudinal markings on the crown. These four Woodcocks may be diagnosed from each other with the greatest ease.

	minor	Tibiæ feathered to the joint.
Pale bars on outer webs of primaries	*saturata*	
	rusticula	
	rochusseni	Pale bars on inner webs of primaries.

None of these three characters, however, are peculiar to the Woodcocks, but are all found in one or other of the Snipes.